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English 11

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Literary Techniques in *Thou Blind Man’s Mark*

Most people admire desire, don’t they? They may like desire for the love of materialistic items. Some people love it for the shoes, the car, or the clothes. Sir Philip Sidney, contrarily, hated desire. He used the poetic devices alliteration, tone, and apostrophe to convey his complex attitude towards desire.

There are several examples of when he uses alliteration to portray desire as a vain enemy. First, he calls it a “cradle of causeless care” (Sidney). Desire, according to him, doesn’t consider the person who wants it at all. He goes even further than that by saying it produces a “mangled mind” (Sidney). Those who chase desire will ironically get nothing good out of it.

In addition to alliteration, he utilizes tone. He expresses that his attitude towards desire is contemptible. To him, it is a “self-chosen snare” (Sidney). It’s just waiting for the right moment to trap those who foolishly seek it. The abhorrence in his voice is also explicit when he used “band of all evils” (Sidney) to describe it. Through this, he says that every immoral thing stems from desire.

Lastly, he uses apostrophe to communicate how he feels about desire. He speaks directly to it as if it’s a conquered adversary. One of the triumphant claims he made was that “in vain thou hast my ruin sought” (Sidney). “In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire” (Sidney) was another one. Just as people pointlessly pursued desire, desire pointlessly tried with all of its strength to destroy others.

In conclusion, Sir Philip Sidney got his message across to his audience by using the efficient literary techniques. He firmly stated that it’s a foe by using alliteration, and his bitter tone makes readers understand that it’s not to be trifled with. Talking directly to it, too, strongly affirms readers that it can be vanquished. Therefore, literary techniques can be used to effectively prove one’s point.